

Message Text

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ACTION IO-14

INFO OCT-01 EUR-12 EA-10 ISO-00 EB-08 AGRE-00 AID-05
ICA-11 COME-00 TRSE-00 STR-07 CIAE-00 INR-10
NSAE-00 L-03 OES-07 DLOS-09 /097 W
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R 210417Z APR 78
FM AMEMBASSY CANBERRA
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 3044
INFO AMEMBASSY BRUSSELS
USMISSION GENEVA
AMEMBASSY PARIS
AMEMBASSY WELLINGTON

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USMTN

DEPARTMENT ALSO PASS AGRICULTURE/FAS

USEEC ALSO FOR EMBASSY

USOECD ALSO FOR EMBASSY

E.O. 11652: N/A
TAGS: EGEN, ETRD, BEXP, EAGR, AS
SUBJECT: SECRETARY FOR PRIMARY INDUSTRY COMMENTS ON TRADE
ISSUES

REF: (A) WELLINGTON 01969, (B) CANBERRA 02670, (C) STATE
89736 (ALL NOTAL)

1. DURING COURSE OF INITIAL CALL ON DOUGLAS MCKAY, SECRETARY
FOR PRIMARY INDUSTRY, BY ECON COUNSELOR ACCOMPANIED BY AGATT,
ON APRIL 20, OPPORTUNITY WAS USED TO DISCUSS RANGE OF ISSUES
INCLUDING BILATERAL AND MULTILATERAL TRADE ISSUES AS PART OF
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A GENERAL "TOUR D'HORIZON".

2. AS DEPARTMENT AWARE, MCKAY WORKED FOR MANY YEARS WITH
BOB SWIFT, NOW AUSTRALIAN MINISTER FOR ECONOMIC AFFAIRS AT
THE AUSTRALIAN EMBASSY IN WASHINGTON AND HAS A LONG HISTORY
OF EXPERTISE IN AGRICULTURAL COMMODITY ISSUES -- HE SPENT SOME
TWENTY YEARS IN THE DEPARTMENT OF AGRUCULTURE AND IN THE

BUREAU OF AGRICULTURAL ECONOMICS BEFORE HE MOVED OVER TO THE DEPARTMENT OF OVERSEAS TRADE. THE LATTER HAS JUST BEEN REORGANIZED INTO THE DEPARTMENT OF TRADE AND RESOURCES.

3. MCKAY SAID THAT HE HAD NOT AS YET HEARD FROM THE DEPARTMENT OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS (DFA) ON THE U.S. SUPPORT OF MAURICE WILLIAMS AS EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR OF THE WORLD FOOD COUNCIL (CANBERRA 02670) AND WOULD TOUCH BASE WITH DFA ON THIS MATTER. HE SAID THAT HE KNEW SIR FREDERICK KEARNS THE UK CANDIDATE VERY WELL AND KNEW HIM TO BE WELL QUALIFIED FOR THE POSITION ALTHOUGH HE HAD NO KNOWLEDGE OF THE STATE OF PLAY WITH RESPECT TO THE GOA'S ATTITUDE ABOUT THE U.S. NOMINEE. HE DID ASK US FOR A RESUME OF WILLIAMS' BACKGROUND AND WE PROVIDED COMMENTS ALONG THE LINES OF STATE 089736. MCKAY SAID THAT HE HAD HEARD THAT THE U.S. HAD OFFICIALLY NOMINATED WILLIAM K. MILLER AS THE NEW ISO EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR BUT THAT ALSO IN THIS CASE HE HAD NOT BEEN REQUESTED FOR COMMENTS FROM DFA.

4. ON THE TWO HUNDRED MILE LIMIT ON FISHERIES ENCOMPASSED IN THE LEGISLATION INTRODUCED BY THE GOVERNMENT INTO PARLIAMENT ON APRIL 13, MCKAY SAID THAT THE ISSUES AS FAR AS AUSTRALIA WAS CONCERNED WERE QUITE COMPLICATED WITH RESPECT TO THE GOA'S RELATIONS WITH PAPUA NEW GUINEA (PNG) IN VIEW OF JURISDICTIONAL DISPUTES CONCERNING ISLANDS IN THE TORRES STRAIT AND THAT AS FAR AS HE WAS AWARE, THE GOA HAD NOT AS LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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YET ADDRESSED ITSELF TO THE IMPLICATIONS OF THE NEW ZEALAND/ USSR FISHERIES AGREEMENT OR WHETHER OR NOT THE USSR WAS LOOKING BEYOND THE AGREEMENT TOWARD FUTURE MOVES TO DEVELOP THE VAST ANTARCTIC FISHERIES RESOURCES (WELLINGTON 01969). MOREOVER, HE SAID THAT THE MAIN PROBLEMS THE GOA WOULD FACE WOULD BE WITH THE JAPANESE WITH RESPECT TO FISHERIES AGREEMENTS WHEN (NOT WHETHER) THE LEGISLATION MOVES THROUGH THE PARLIAMENT. U.S. SHRIMP FISHING WITHIN THE GOA'S 200 MILE LIMIT IS ALSO NOT A MATTER OF CONCERN AT THIS TIME ACCORDING TO MCKAY. (EMBASSY'S LETTER PER STATE 72824 HAD NOT YET FILTERED DOWN TO HIM.)

5. TURNING TO THE MRN, WE POINTED OUT THAT AUSTRALIA'S OFFERS IN AGRICULTURE WERE INADEQUATE AND UNLESS MORE RESPONSIVE OFFERS WERE MADE SOON, IT WOULD BE DIFFICULT TO MAKE ANY PROGRESS PARTICULARLY ON IMPORTANT BILATERAL ISSUES. MCKAY ACKNOWLEDGED THIS POINTING OUT HE WAS ALL FOR FREER TRADE AND SAID AUSTRALIA WOULD BE TALKING WITH U.S. OFFICIALS ABOUT THE TOBACCO-WOOL ISSUE WITHIN A WEEK OR TWO. HE SAID THIS ISSUE MUST BE SETTLED AS THE NEW TOBACCO STABILIZATION SCHEME HAD TO BE FINALIZED SOON SO THAT GROWERS COULD COMPLETE THEIR PLANTING INTENTIONS. WE ALSO

POINTED OUT A NUMBER OF OTHER COMMODITIES, INCLUDING CIRRUS JUICE, WHERE WE WOULD BE SEEKING A SUBSTANTIAL REDUCTION IN TARIFFS IN THE MRN.

6. WE THEN SOUGHT HIS SUPPORT IN SEEING WHAT HIS DEPARTMENT COULD DO TO HELP CLEAR THE WAY FOR GETTING SOME OF OUR HOTEL TYPE BEEF ON THE AUSTRALIAN MARKET AS WELL AS A CHANGE IN REGULATIONS SO THAT HORSES COULD BE SHIPPED DIRECT FROM THE UNITED STATES TO AUSTRALIA. MCKAY SAID THAT THESE TWO ISSUES WERE LARGELY ANIMAL HEALTH PROBLEMS WHICH WERE HANDLED BY THE DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH, BUT AGREED TO TALK TO BILL GEE, DIRECTOR OF THE BUREAU OF ANIMAL HEALTH, ABOUT THIS PROBLEM. HE SAID HE WAS WELL AWARE OF THE POLITICAL PROBLEMS OF MAINTAINING A TOTAL BAN ON U.S. BEEF IMPORTS. LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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7. MCKAY SAID THAT HE HAD HEARD NOTHING OF A PROPOSED VISIT TO AUSTRALIA PERHAPS DURING THE MONTH OF AUGUST OF SECRETARY OF AGRICULTURE BERGLAND. WE NOTED THAT THIS HAD COME TO OUR ATTENTION FROM SOURCES JUST BACK FROM THE U.S. BUT THAT WE ALSO HAD HAD NO OFFICIAL CONFIRMATION OF THIS AT THIS JUNCTURE. WE PROMISED TO TOUCH BASE ON THIS SHOULD WE HEAR FURTHER. WASHINGTON COMMENTS WOULD BE APPRECIATED EARLIEST SINCE MCKAY SAID THAT, LIKE THE EMBASSY, HE WOULD SEE SUCH A VISIT AS MOST USEFUL. ALSTON

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